

University of Dundee

Dispositif, Matter, Affect, and the Real

Woodward, Ashley

Published in:
Film-Philosophy

DOI:
[10.3366/film.2019.0118](https://doi.org/10.3366/film.2019.0118)

Publication date:
2019

Licence:
CC BY-NC

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication in Discovery Research Portal](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Woodward, A. (2019). Dispositif, Matter, Affect, and the Real: Four Fundamental Concepts of Lyotard's Film-Philosophy. *Film-Philosophy*, 23(3), 303-323. <https://doi.org/10.3366/film.2019.0118>

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in Discovery Research Portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from Discovery Research Portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain.
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal.

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Dispositif, Matter, Affect, and the Real: Four Fundamental Concepts of Lyotard's Film-Philosophy

Ashley Woodward, University of Dundee

Abstract:

Jean-François Lyotard's work remains a largely untapped resource for film-philosophy. This article surveys four fundamental concepts which indicate the fecundity of this work for current studies and debates. While Lyotard was generally associated with the "theory" of the 1980s which privileged language, signs, and cultural representations, much of his work in fact resonates more strongly with the new materialisms and realisms currently taking centre stage. The concepts examined here indicate the relevance of Lyotard's work in four related contemporary contexts: the renewed interest in the *dispositif*, new materialism, the affective turn, and speculative realism. The concept of the *dispositif* (or apparatus) is being rehabilitated in the contemporary context because it shows a way beyond the limiting notion of *mise en scène* which has dominated approaches to film, and Lyotard's prevalent use of this concept feeds into this renewal. While matter is not an explicit theme in Lyotard's writings on film, it is nevertheless one at the heart of his aesthetics, and it may be extended for application to film. Affect was an important theme for Lyotard in many contexts, including his approaches to film, where it appears to subvert film's "seductive" (ideological) effects. Finally, the Real emerges as a central concept in Lyotard's last essay on cinema, where, perhaps surprisingly, it intimates something close to a speculative realist aesthetics. Each of the fundamental concepts of Lyotard's film-philosophy are introduced in the context of the current fields and debates to which they are relevant, and are discussed with filmic examples, including Michael Snow's *La Région centrale* (1971), Roberto Rossellini's *Stromboli (Stromboli, terra di Dio)*, 1950), Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979), and neo-realist cinema.

Film-Philosophy 23.3 (2019): 303–323

DOI: 10.3366/film.2019.0118

© Ashley Woodward. This article is published as Open Access under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial Licence (<http://www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/>) which permits non-commercial use, distribution and reproduction provided the original work is cited. For commercial re-use, please refer to our website at: www.eupublishing.com/customer-services/authors/permissions.
www.eupublishing.com/film

Keywords: Jean-François Lyotard; dispositif; new materialism; affect; speculative realism.

“Film-Philosophy” is still a relatively recent area of study, and it is still populating its field of sources. In particular, it is seeking beyond Gilles Deleuze and Stanley Cavell, the two master-names who have dominated the field so far. My aim here is to introduce Jean-François Lyotard as a potential such source. While Lyotard never wrote any book-length studies of film, and in this sense his work is not comparable to either Deleuze or Cavell in scope, he produced a number of rich and eclectic contributions. He wrote four essays dedicated to film: “Acinema,” “The Unconscious as Mise-en-scène,” “Two Metamorphoses of the Seductive in Cinema,” and “The Idea of a Sovereign Film” (collected in Jones & Woodward, 2017). While all are brief, they have much potential for extrapolation in relation to his broader aesthetics and art writings (where film is also occasionally mentioned). Lyotard also dabbled in the making of experimental film, and his credits include the short films *L'Autre scène* (with Dominique Avron, Claudine Eizykman, and Guy Fihman, 1969), *Mao Gillette* (1974), *Tribune sans tribun* (1978), *Aè blanc* (1982), and the planned but unproduced *Mémorial immémorial* (1987). The legacy of Lyotard’s work on film has been extended by the films and theoretical writings of his students and collaborators, Claudine Eizkyman and Guy Fihman (see, for example, Eizykman, 1975; Eizykman & Fihman, 2000), as well as by later students and scholars such as Jean-Louis Déotte (2004) and Jean-Michel Durafour (2009). This then makes for a broad field of both theoretical and practical resources for film-philosophy, extending far beyond what the four short essays might suggest.

Lyotard has already been positioned as a film-philosopher in some existing research, notably by being given a place in the book *Film, Theory and Philosophy: The Key Thinkers* (Trahair, 2009), and by various articles using his work in relation to film (for example French, 2010; Geller, 2007; Mee, 2016). Until recently, however, works in English have been narrowly focused, especially on the essay “Acinema” or the categories of the figural or the sublime, and some of Lyotard’s work on film (several essays and his own films) have been entirely unknown. Matters have been a little better in France, where a book-length study has provided a broad and sensitive approach (Durafour, 2009), but the author notes how unjustly Lyotard has in general been ignored, polemically dismissed, or his ideas stolen without acknowledgement by French film theorists (Durafour, 2017). In some recent publications (Jones & Woodward, 2017; Woodward, 2014), I have sought to introduce the full range of Lyotard’s work

Four Fundamental Concepts of Lyotard's Film-Philosophy

in film-philosophy to the Anglophone readership, but with limited contextualisation which would explain and justify its continued contemporary relevance. My aim here is to redress this.

Much recent critical thought agrees on turning away from the linguistic paradigm which dominated theory in the second half of the twentieth century, and in exploring the extra-linguistic. In this context, Lyotard's work on matter, affect, the body, the visual, and so on, are due for a rediscovery. My aim here is simply to indicate some points of contact between Lyotard's film-philosophy, and some notable theoretical currents in film theory and the arts and humanities more broadly, in order to introduce his work as being of potential relevance and interest today. I have selected four such points of contact, which may be considered four fundamental concepts of Lyotard's film-philosophy. These concepts are *dispositif*, matter, affect, and the real. The approach I adopt here is quite schematic: each section will introduce the broad relevance of the idea in theory today, then explain Lyotard's unique contribution. The treatment of each will be far from exhaustive, and aims to invite further research and development.

Dispositif

The notion of the *dispositif* was introduced into film theory in the early 1970s with theorists such as Christian Metz and Jean-Louis Baudry. It is a concept also prevalent in poststructuralist philosophy, most notably the thought of Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, and Lyotard. The idea has already had a significant reception in Anglophone film theory, translated by the term "apparatus" (see Rosen, 1986), but it is gaining renewed attention among many film theorists today. (This new reception tends to be more comfortable with the French term, and leaves it untranslated.) The rediscovery and current relevance of the notion of *dispositif* for film theory has been charted by, among others, Adrian Martin (2011) and André Parente and Victa de Carvalho (2008).

Both articles seek to give an account of the current relevance of the notion of the *dispositif* by contrasting it with a dominant way in which cinema has been understood in the past. Martin names this the *mise en scène*, and, citing the critical work of Raymond Bellour, explains its limitations as follows:

With the assumption of the centrality of the scene comes a great baggage, which is precisely the baggage of classicism in the arts: continuity, verisimilitude, the ensemble effect in acting performance, narrative articulation, the necessity for smoothness and fluidity, centring, legibility and formal balance. (2011)

Parente and de Carvalho point to what they call simply “Cinema Form,” which is characteristic of narrative cinema with its concern to create a “reality effect” and its employment of an “aesthetics of transparency.” Echoing Martin’s analysis, this aesthetic is that of the *mise en scène*, where the focus is on the scene itself, the illusion of reality created in the cinematic frame.

The turn from *mise en scène* to *dispositif* is a turn from a focus on the scene itself to a focus on the *mise en*, the “putting into” scene, the whole apparatus of cinema which makes cinematic effects possible (Martin, 2011). Martin defines the *dispositif* quite generally as “a fixed and systematic set-up or arrangement of elements,” then hastens to clarify that

a *dispositif* is not a mechanistic or rigid formal system: it is more like an aesthetic guide-track that is as open to variation, surprise or artful contradiction as the filmmaker (who sets it in motion) decrees. (2011)

Parente and de Carvalho suggest that a cinematic *dispositif* can be understood as usually having three specifiable elements: its architecture (the movie theatre or other place where the film is shown), its technology (the movie camera, projector, and so on), and its narrative form (the structure imposed on moving images through editing). They argue that Cinema Form has dominated film theory and our understanding of cinema’s possibilities for much of its history, but that recent developments have exposed the fact that this is only one possible *dispositif* among others. In short, they argue that new technologies have accentuated the expanded possibilities of cinema, possibilities which have existed throughout its history, but have been occluded by the almost exclusive focus on Cinema Form. The *dispositif* is a concept which allows us to better think these expanded possibilities, which are now at the forefront of what is at stake in cinema. Among the historical cinematic *dispositifs* which lie outside Cinema Form are the “cinema of attractions,” as the first experiments in cinema, from its inception in 1895 to the first narrative films of 1908, have been called; “expanded cinema,” which incorporates elements of theatre and performance, and the “cinema of exhibition,” or “artist’s cinema,” which refers to the increasingly common situation of film in art galleries rather than movie theatres (see Parente & de Carvalho, 2008, pp. 46–50).

Along with philosophers such as Foucault and Deleuze, and film theorists such as Baudry, Lyotard is one of the thinkers whose work is feeding into this renewed consideration of the *dispositif*. Throughout his oeuvre, the general notion of the *dispositif* is developed from a number of different perspectives, most prominently the libidinal and the linguistic.

What is essential to Lyotard's approach throughout these perspectives is that the *dispositif* is for him (as for other poststructuralists) a way to re-describe structures, in order to take into account the aspects of indeterminacy within, and at the limits of, what structuralists take to be wholly determining and determined. Lyotard's *dispositifs* allow for the disruption and change of old structures and the genesis of new ones, as well as all the complex relations between relatively changing and relatively static elements in and between *dispositifs*. For Lyotard, a *dispositif* may be understood as a series of exclusions, a grid for filtering, allowing the inscription and exhibition of some sensations, words, narratives, and other elements, while prohibiting others. The *mise en scène* excludes in order to produce a reality effect, in conformity not with reality itself, but with certain conventions which we have learned to recognise through cultural norms as representing reality.

Parente and de Carvalho (2008) specify that one of the reasons "why so many theoreticians of contemporary cinema – largely inspired by Deleuze, Foucault and Lyotard – have problematized the issue of *dispositif* [...is in order] to show that cinema can produce an image that eludes traditional representation" (p. 45). In order to see this in Lyotard, we may look to his 1977 paper "The Unconscious as *Mise-en-scène*," where he outlines the move from *mise en scène* to *dispositif* by contrasting the "classical" space of representation (for example, Hollywood cinema of the 1930s) with the "perspectival" space of experimental cinema (for which Michael Snow's 1971 *La Région centrale* is taken as exemplary).

Lyotard suggests (and this is consistent with the analyses of Parente and de Carvalho) that the aesthetic of classical Hollywood cinema is taken from that established in the theatres and opera houses of nineteenth century Europe. A series of exclusions is imposed which may be understood as conforming with the construction of the theatre, where reality (the theatre's outside) is separated from the stage, the apparatus required for constructing the scene on stage (the backstage, wings, orchestra pit, and so on, are hidden, and sole attention is focused on the unfolding of scenes on the stage). In cinema, the reality effect is created in a similar way, through giving unity to moving images and sound according to diegesis in the temporal order, perspectival representation in the spatial order, and what is considered to be appropriate "film music" in the sonic order (see Lyotard, 1973/2017a, p. 34). Moreover, we recognise "reality" through the unfolding of images at a conventional rate, that of 24 frames per second. The exclusions which are effected through all the operations of *mise en scène*, from scripting and directing to editing, sound design, and final production, eliminate images and sounds which

are “badly formed,” which do not contribute to the unity and sense of the scenes or of the whole film.

These conventions of representation, generally so familiar that they remain unconscious and unnoticed, are exploded by the unconventional cinematic *dispositif* employed in Snow’s *La Région centrale*. This film radically flouts two of the three main elements of the cinematic *dispositif* that Parente and de Carvalho identify: the cinematic technology, and the narrative form. Working with a technician, Snow developed a new technology for the capture of images, consisting of a mechanised support able to move the camera in all possible directions. The robotic movements could be preprogrammed, obviating the need for direct human intervention during the filming. The film itself is the result of setting this mechanism in motion in a remote, mountainous Canadian landscape. Its 180 minutes of twisting and turning perspectives on the landscape owes little or nothing to narrative-representative cinema.

Lyotard (1977/2017c, pp. 52–53) lists some of the ways in which the conventions of cinema are overturned with this exceptional cinematic *dispositif*:

1. The elimination of framing, allowing us to see what is usually excluded from the shot – including perspectives not consistent with the upright position of the human body; parts of the cinematic machinery itself; and so on.
2. The images do not construct a setting or stage; they do not establish an identity. The film accumulates figures which are recognisably “of” the same space, but without constructing that space as an identifiable stage, a space of representation, on which a story could unfold. In Lyotard’s words, “all the figures smash themselves on Snow’s film due to the coagulant, centripetal, materialist force of the lens’ journey.”
3. The film does not unfold a narrative through the conventions of temporality, pacing, and repetition of meaningful images.

Snow’s work is just one example of how experimental cinema can create cinematic *dispositifs* other than the dominant narrative-representational one (in his various writings, Lyotard also refers to the works of experimental filmmakers such as Hans Richter, Viking Eggeling, Francis Thompson, Gianfranco Baruchello, Tony Conrad, and Werner Nekes).

According to Parente and de Carvalho, while experimental cinema, the cinema of attraction, and expanded cinema are nothing new, the displacements of the classical cinematic *dispositif* they enact are becoming increasingly centralised because of the many mutations of the cinematic

image in contemporary culture: from daily encounters through personal computing, individual creation and curation of film through portable miniaturised technologies of capture and publication (mobile phones, laptops), to the role of cinema in the art world, and the generalised internalisation of cinematic ways of thinking and seeing. The traditional cinematic *dispositif* is displaced along all its main axes: its architecture of display, its technology of capture and reproduction, and its classical narrative form. While Lyotard perhaps did not see all the consequences of such an expansion of film with new technologies, his thinking of the *dispositif* lends itself to the rethinking of film Parente and de Carvalho call for.

Matter

In his already cited article, Martin (2011) links the currency of the *dispositif* with the question of matter, writing that “it is precisely materiality – the ways in which we define it, and deploy it, in relation to cinema – which is at stake, and in flux, today.” This question of materiality may be inscribed in a wider network of contemporary questions and concerns which sometimes goes under the name “new materialism” (see, for example, Bennet, 2010; Coole & Frost, 2010; Dolphijn & Van der Tuin, 2012; Hickey-Moody & Page, 2015). Broadly speaking, new materialism is distinguished by the concern to accord a degree of agency to matter, objects, or things, an agency which has traditionally been reserved for human beings. New materialism positions itself as a corrective to the culturalism or social constructivism which dominated the humanities in the latter half of the twentieth century; it seeks to reconsider the importance of the material qualities of the body, the natural world, and things in general beyond their reduction to human-imposed systems of signification, narrative, and meaning. It sees human beings alongside and interacting with things within complex networks. The notion of “agential matter” reconceives agency as a dynamism inherent in matter which makes a thing something that other things, including but not exclusively human beings, must contend with (Poe, 2011, p. 157).

New materialism developed initially as a metaphysical and political concern, and Andrew Poe could write in 2011 that “it is unclear yet and how neo-materialists regard the question of whether there remains an aesthetic dimension to ‘things’” (p. 161). This question has since been further explored, and has been taken up by some in relation to film (see, for example, the 2012 collection by Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt, which is explicitly framed as an attempt to meet this challenge in the arts, and includes a section on film). As the remarks of both Martin and Poe

quoted here suggest, there is not yet any consensus around how a rethinking of the materiality of film can and should be thought, and theorists contributing to this general trajectory are in fact moving in a number of directions. It is in this context that we may consider the pertinence of the theme of matter in Lyotard's film-philosophy as one such possible direction.

"Matter" is not a term made central in any of Lyotard's writings on film, but it is central to much of his wider writings in aesthetics. There are, I would suggest, a number of ways matter may be seen as thoroughly implicated in Lyotard's reflections on film. For a start, his first and so-far most influential essay on film, "Acinema," may be understood in the context of his philosophical approach at the time, sometimes described as "libidinal materialism." This is a phrase which names a development in French philosophy in the early 1970s which also includes Deleuze and Félix Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1972/1983), by which Lyotard's book *Libidinal Economy* (1974/1993) was deeply influenced. (This point of contact is doubly notable, since the influence of Deleuze's work has, of course, been instrumental in the development of both film-philosophy and new materialism.)

Lyotard's "libidinal materialism" might be seen as a certain take on the web of agential things, combining human beings and things in a network of relations vitalised by the dynamic force of libido. Libidinal materialism is a general ontology, according to which all things are produced and transformed in what Lyotard calls the "libidinal band." In an apparent anticipation of the lists of random, material, nonhuman things fetishised by new materialists and object-oriented ontologists, Lyotard (1974/1993) writes that the libidinal band "is made from the most heterogenous textures, bone, epithelium, sheets to write on, charged atmospheres, swords, glass cases, peoples, grasses, canvases to paint" (p. 2). The libidinal band is a system in which *dispositifs* are arrangements of material elements invested with libidinal energy (desire) which function according to their own autonomy, working on bodies to affect the way desire flows in and through those bodies, changing how the bodies themselves are organised, and how desire is channelled in them. Humans themselves are viewed from a nonhuman perspective as "economic" systems of desire, in such a way that conscious agency can be accounted for (in terms of Freudian secondary psychical processes), but not given primacy, and such that they may be seen as profoundly connected with the things in their environment, open to transformation in relation to the flows and *dispositifs* they are "plugged into." In the libidinal band humans and nonhuman things are constituted together, in larger economies of libidinal flow and organisation. It is in this way that Lyotard can point

to the intermingling of films and their spectators, where *mise en scène* is a kind of *dispositif* which acts on the social body as much as it acts on the body of film, and the transformations of experimental film can effect operations on the “client-bodies” of spectators and on the broader social body by reorganising the flows of desire in them. Taking up this line of thought, a materialist aesthetic of film could be developed as a species of the “libidinal economic aesthetics” Lyotard develops in this period of his work, and briefly outlines in “Acinema.”

Another direction is suggested by Lyotard's later aesthetics, where the term “matter” becomes more explicitly central. Jean-Michel Durafour (2009, pp. 128–136; 2017, pp. 25–28) has written some fascinating, suggestive pages on the way in which this later work opens onto a materialist aesthetic of film. Durafour distinguishes Lyotard's understanding of matter from that of the philosophical tradition in a way which resonates with current writings in new materialism. For Plato, he reminds us, matter is purely passive, the support for forms (as exemplified by the *khôra* in the *Timaeus*). While it may be a necessary substrate for what exists, it contributes nothing to the essence, to what the existent thing is. Aristotle makes little progress, as for him matter is nothing but a “coefficient of resistance” (Durafour, 2012, p. 253) to form. Durafour then points to the way that Henri Focillon, in his 1934 book *The Life of Forms in Art*, questioned this tradition by arguing that matter itself has properties which contribute to giving form. In art, this is evident through the ways that different materials and tools lend themselves to the shaping of works, so that, for example, a painting and an ink sketch of the same subject will have quite different expressive qualities. Durafour inserts Lyotard in this opening, suggesting that he goes much further than Focillon in giving aesthetic primacy to matter.

For Lyotard, however, matter is not (or is not just) “material,” understood in a physical sense. It is not, for example, the rushes of a film, or the equipment of filming and projection, that might be studied by a historical-empirical approach. Matter needs to be understood in terms of the categories of philosophical aesthetics, specifically in relation to sensation and feeling, and – at least as an initial approach – in contrast with form. We can see with Immanuel Kant (for example) why form has been privileged in the aesthetic tradition. For him, form is that which prepares sensation for matching with concepts. It is what allows aesthetic judgements between different people to be, at least in principle, possibly consistent, since form is the “sameness” or principle of identity applied to sensations which structures and gives shape to perceptions. By contrast, Lyotard (1988/1991) tells us that, for Kant, matter is “what is *par excellence* diverse, unstable, and evanescent” (p. 138). Matter is

received as sensation prior to the imposition of form; it is pure and immediate sensuous presence. Lyotard concedes that this is paradoxical, as form is required for any perceptual experience at all. Yet, this does not mean that there is not an element of matter or pure sensation in every form which is irreducible to it, and Lyotard points to this “unformed” matter as what produces unpredictable affects and sensations in the body, and resists reduction to concepts in the mind (and is thus the source of art’s ability to surprise and move us).

According to Durafour (2017), “this matter finds a fertile ground for expression in the cinematic image” (p. 27). For him, we may extend Lyotard’s explicit works in order to locate the aesthetic of matter in film. He gives two brief examples. First, Durafour (2009, pp. 134–136) points to the closing scenes of Roberto Rossellini’s *Stromboli* (*Stromboli, terra di Dio*, 1950), where Ingrid Bergman’s character Karin climbs the volcano. Matter becomes an aesthetic element of film through the rocky slopes of the volcano, and their blending with Karin’s weeping face: the grain of the stone and the volcanic fumes become expressive qualities indistinguishable from Karin’s anguish. Second, Durafour (2017, pp. 27–28) points to the close-ups in John Cassavetes’ *Faces* (1968), which, with the aid of deliberately harsh lighting, reveals the grain of human skin as we are not used to perceiving it. This shows something uncomfortable about our own materiality, about the vulnerability of our humanity. As Durafour puts it, it shows bodies, skins, as “holey,” something penetrable by sensations. According to Lyotard, we do not exist apart from being summoned to life by the stimulation of sensation, and the recognition of this brings anxiety because it shows that our state is one of dependence, and the threat of nonexistence. For Durafour, the grainy, holey skins of Cassavetes’ *Faces* summons our anxiety through confronting us with the matter which we are not only sensitive to, but which we ourselves are, and on which we depend. Durafour’s examples are perhaps too literal, pointing to the grain of matter depicted in film in rather obvious ways. (There would be many other ways in which matter could be presented more subtly.) But what these examples show is that affect is aroused by, or mixes with, the sensation of matter as expressed in film, and not simply from the diegesis, from the composition of beautiful forms, or from the treatment of material elements as signifiers of concepts.

Lyotard (1988/1991, pp. 139–141) specifies indeterminate elements as presenting matter in various media: the matter of painting is colour, the matter of music is timbre, the matter of thought is words. What would be the matter of film in these terms? Not the cellulose nitrate or acetate itself, but perhaps the visual and sonic specificities inherent in film – the graininess of celluloid, the grids of video, the pixels of digital film, and

the effects these can create. Yet ultimately, for Lyotard, matter concerns a pure sensuous presence which can only be felt, not constructed as a theory to be used for identification in advance. We can only properly speak of “this” matter in this film, this scene, this shot. Lyotard’s emphasis on matter as an aesthetic category leads, as he himself emphasised, to the abandonment of aesthetics as a theory – that is, as a stable system of concepts which allows us to recognise things and set them up in a discourse of knowledge – and a materialist aesthetic of film would compel us in the same direction. Matter would only ever be a function of affect, something to be felt.

Affect

Affect is another area around which a recent focus of interest in film theory (for example, Brinkema, 2014; Rutherford, 2003) can be seen within the wider context of critical cultural theory, where, since the mid-1990s, there has been a so-called “affective turn” (for example, Clough & Halley, 2007; Gregg & Seigworth, 2010). It may be thought of more or less broadly: very broadly, the turn would include a recent interest in emotion and feeling generally speaking. Yet more narrowly, affect refers to pre-personal, pre-subjective, unconscious bodily feelings, in distinction to the recognisable and representable emotions experienced by a conscious subject (this distinction was influentially explained in Massumi, 1995). Two main currents feed into the affective turn – the theory of psychobiologist Silvan Tompkins, and that of Gilles Deleuze. With the combined influence of the latter’s *Cinema* books and wider writings on affect, it is no surprise that we see Lyotard’s Vincennes colleague once again as a pivotal figure. A host of questions and ways of answering them are thrown up by this turn, but again we see a move away from the linguistic, semiotic, and representational tendencies of earlier theories, which focused on the rational structures intelligible beneath the aesthetic surface of the film, towards an interest in how cinematic sounds and images impact on and affect the bodies of spectators, transforming their somatic states and feelings.

While Deleuze’s theory of affect has a clearly Spinozan pedigree, Lyotard’s is primarily Freudian (though there is an admixture of Friedrich Nietzsche in both). Again affect is an issue which traverses Lyotard’s various periods and approaches, and it could be taken up in at least two distinct ways in relation to different concerns with Sigmund Freud. In the period of *Libidinal Economy* and “Acinema,” affect appears as a part of the libidinal economy, and often called by the name “intensity” (inspired by Georges Bataille and Pierre Klossowski). Affect is the intense, disruptive effect of libidinal energy when it reaches excessively high or low states in a

system, upsetting its equilibrium and forcing it to change. Most obviously, in film, affects could be located at what Lyotard calls the two poles of the acinema, stasis and excessive movement, and the effects these have on the client-body. The mobility/immobility on the client-body and the screen can be understood as modulations of affect in the libidinal economy, as intensities flow between film and spectator.

I will focus my remarks here, however, on an alternative way of approaching affect in film that we can find in the later Lyotard. In the 1980s, Lyotard's interest in Freud moved from libidinal economy to the functioning of "unconscious affect" and the strange economy of *Nachträglichkeit*, or deferred action, in which it is embroiled. After Lyotard's own "linguistic turn," the high point of which is 1983's *The Differend* (Lyotard, 1983/1988), he wanted to write a *Differend* part 2, which would account, in the same linguistic terms, for the extra-linguistic things left out of that book: things such as the body, the unconscious, colour, and affect. The proposed project was never completed as a book, but various studies for it were written, notably for our interest here a short essay called "The Affect-Phrase" (Lyotard, 1990/2006). In light of this essay, we can retrospectively see important ways in which this second approach to affect was already partially developed in relation to film in Lyotard's 1980 essay "Two Metamorphoses of the Seductive in Cinema."

Here Lyotard analyses certain effects of cinema from the point of view of the pragmatics of language. Narrative film is described in terms of the pragmatics of seduction suggested by some texts of Gorgias and Plato. This pragmatics is as follows: the addressor addresses a narrative to addressees, containing referents (characters) which they are implicitly invited to identify with. This identification-function, through which the addressees take the place of the referents, places them under an obligation which is not the result of an explicitly formulated prescription. The addressees are thus "seduced" into adopting certain viewpoints and values, and perhaps carrying out certain actions. Such seduction frequently functions as political propaganda, or ideology, as spectators identify with characters on screen and adopt their attitudes.

Lyotard construes Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979) as for the most part typifying this kind of politically seductive film; its implicit message is a condemnation of the Vietnam war. Yet, he also takes one particular sequence in this film – the attack on the Vietnamese village by the American soldiers – as an example of how cinema can have non-seductive effects. In this sequence, Lyotard contends, the narrative breaks down, as we are bombarded with sights and sounds at a degree of intensity which breaks with the regular organisation through which the

Four Fundamental Concepts of Lyotard's Film-Philosophy

narrative is constructed. Under such conditions, meaning is lost, swept away in the tide of intense visual and sonorous effects. Here the addressee (i.e., the film's spectator) escapes the seductive effect, since there is no longer a narrative which could impose an obligation. Lyotard (1980/2017d) writes:

There is a panic on the scene. All the little stories concerning the principal and secondary characters sketched previously are wiped out or blurred, rendered ungraspable in an instant. The scene empties itself of meaning. The eloquence, and the implicit prescriptions which are associated with it, sink in the overflow of information. [...] There is nothing to do, nor to plan, nor to remember, nor to sense, there is nothing on the horizon. One is stupid. The panic is that no narrative can take charge of the chaos of the given and propose an obligation for the addressee. This addressee is not seduced. (p. 59)

While fragmentary and immature in articulation, I suggest that we see here an intimation of the affect-phrase. The affect-phrase is Lyotard's attempt to formalise feeling as a phrase. According to *The Differend*, phrases in general present a "phrase universe," consisting of the four instances of addressor, addressee, referent, and sense. Such a universe does not determine any necessity regarding what phrase may be linked with it (i.e., follow on from it), but it does imply "pertinences" of linkage – that is, there are some phrases which will follow more "naturally" than others. Lyotard (1990/2006, p. 104) defines the affect-phrase as an unarticulated phrase. This means that it is silent, and in technical terms, that it does not present a phrase universe. It has no addressor, addressee, or referent. It has a sense, but only as the minimal meaning of a feeling, pleasure and/or pain. The affect-phrase occurs in the context of articulated phrases, but can only suspend or interrupt their linkage, damaging the genre of discourse in which it appears (Lyotard, 2006, p. 105). In the Coppola sequence, there is a "disarticulation" of the pragmatic instances, addressor, addressee, and referent, such that narrative meaning fails. From a narrative pragmatic perspective, this failure is equivalent to silence. Structurally the failure of seduction and the affect-phrase are similar insofar as they both indicate a break in narrative meaning (for the affect-phrase, a break in any genre of discourse), and are thus construed negatively from the perspective of discourse.

In "Two Metamorphoses of the Seductive in Cinema" (1980/2017d), Lyotard tells a story about a student of his, a Vietnam veteran, who found it impossible to talk about the war. Lyotard then suggests that the attack sequence in *Apocalypse Now* helped him (Lyotard) to

understand why: because the student felt deauthorised to do so, to translate his experience into the meaning that narrative bestows upon it. Between his feeling regarding the war and any discourse about it, there is (in Lyotard's more precise later terms) a differend, an incommensurability which does not allow translation without losing that which is essential to the feeling itself. While again the attempt to articulate this idea remains immature here, we can see an intimation of the way Lyotard will later take up and develop Freud's idea of the unconscious affect, a key source for his idea of the affect-phrase.

With this way of treating affect in relation to film, we see something like a reversal of the Lacanian-Althusserian critique of filmic ideology. For Lyotard, the entire aesthetic dimension of film (the imaginary) is not reduced to ideological-seductive effects, which would need to be rationally analysed (reduced to the symbolic), ruining our enjoyment, as Laura Mulvey (1975) has put it, in order to escape ideology. Rather, ideology-seduction is constructed through a rationalising process acting as a filter for sensations and imposing on them the "good form" of narrative. Lyotard proposes that these effects can be avoided, not by escaping into rational abstraction, but by delving deeper into sensation, into aesthetic experimentation. Lyotard's approach(es) to affect may be located at the junction of the concern with the ideological function of film and with its wider effects, of the linguistic turn and the affective turn, of the formal and the felt. Moreover, his concerns with the unconscious affect speak to theorisations of trauma, of memory and memorialisation, and how these might be enacted through film. Silence, or an overwhelming proliferation of strident sounds and dazzling images both register a feeling which can only interact negatively with articulate sentences, narratives, representations, or social and political subject positions, but which in so doing both calls attention to the limits of these, and forces them to change. Affects in film are thus indices both of the limits of representation, and of positive transformation.

The Real

"The real" has been placed firmly on the agenda for film theory with the emergence of second wave Lacanianism in the late 1980s. A pivotal figure here is of course Slavoj Žižek, and other notables include Joan Copjec and Todd McGowan. In contrast to the first wave (represented by influential figures such as Christian Metz and Laura Mulvey), which viewed film on the model of the mirror phase and gave priority to the imaginary register, second-wave Lacanianism pointed to the misunderstanding of the gaze by these earlier theorists and sought to rehabilitate Jacques Lacan's relevance to film through a refocusing of

Four Fundamental Concepts of Lyotard's Film-Philosophy

attention on the register of the real (see McGowan, 2008; McGowan & Kunkle, 2004). For Lacan, the real does not designate empirical reality as constructed and perceived by an adult mind, but rather the residues of our first, infant perceptions of the world which persist in the unconscious and at times insist in our psychic life, disrupting the sense we make of the world. For Lacanian theorists, films are interpreted as analogues for the drama of psychic economy, in which elements of the real intrude into and disrupt the fantasy which structures the narrative.

The real is a concept which appears in its own way in Lyotard's film-philosophy, emerging in his last essay on the topic, "The Idea of a Sovereign Film" (2000/2017b). Here he is concerned to locate the artistic event inside, or immanent to, representational narrative through a discussion of "realist" film. He defines this as follows:

I will call realist any art (literary, pictorial or filmic) which represents perceptual reality (visual, sonorous, etc.) and the human voices which belong to this reality. And also which narrates the movement of reality, which renders its succession in a narrative: a beginning, an event that is a kind of conflict, a crisis, and the outcome that constitutes the conclusion of the narrative. (p. 63)

In this essay, Lyotard primarily focuses on Italian neo-realism, but clearly extends what he means by realism to the films of the French New Wave and New German Cinema, as well as to auteurs of other countries such as Orson Welles and Yasujirō Ozu. He locates these realist films historically to their emergence after the Second World War, and explicitly follows Deleuze in characterising this emergence of neo-realism in film as a transition from the movement-image to the time-image. With films of the movement-image, all images and movements are subordinated to the overall narrative form (which, for Deleuze, corresponds with the "sensori-motor schema" of the body). With the neo-realist films of the time-image, by contrast, while the narrative form remains dominant, it

admits or tolerates, to various degrees, movements which do not flow to the same rhythm as the flux of the whole, blocks of temporality in suspense, whose relative arrhythmy does not necessarily signal that we find ourselves at the acme of the narrative. (Lyotard, 2000/2017b, pp. 63–64)

Lyotard calls these moments by a myriad of names: "uncanny moments," "intense instants," "temporal spasms," "filmic facts," and so on. But for our interests here we may draw attention to his naming them "the ontological real," and for simplicity's sake use the term he takes from Paul Schrader (1972/2018) to describe them: "stases." Stases are

ambiguous moments where, on the one hand, the sound-image remains consistent with and subordinated to the representative-narrative form of the film, but, on the other hand, they present a “sovereign materiality.” Stases present “the presence of an unfamiliar reality in ordinary reality” (Lyotard, 2000/2017b, p. 65). The film seems to become interested in something which is part of the narrated reality, in a way which is somehow in excess of the story being told. An example is the way the camera might linger on an everyday object, such as a pot of water boiling on a stove. Lyotard (2000/2017b) invokes a metaphor of breath, and explains:

The breath deregulates itself, the breath which regularly animates the narrative. A tracking shot forwards or backwards, very slow or very quick, a zoom, a panorama, a freeze frame, a fade, a defocusing, an ellipsis in the linking of shots, and many other procedures can also produce this breathlessness. (p. 65)

If the object we are presented with in the image remains recognisable and is not deformed, then how is it altered? Lyotard specifies that it is the space-time in which the thing is presented. A stasis is contrasted with a sequence-shot, where the latter suggests “a network of associated images, a potential constellation of situations, people, objects” (Lyotard, 2000/2017b, p. 66), in such a way that these associations unfold in narrative, chronological time. The stasis is a “temporal spasm” which contracts these various associations and the space-time of perception, and accumulates in itself the virtual presence of all past and possible events associated with the presented object. This accumulation is potential and intensity. Lyotard refers to Kant and Deleuze to describe the stasis as a “transcendental factuality immanent to sensations” (2000/2017b, p. 69). That is, he specifies the stasis by saying that rather than chronological time as such, that of “ordinary experience,” which is presented as unfolding in narrative cinema, the stasis presents the transcendental condition of possibility of temporality as such. The stasis is static because it presents the form of time, which does not flow past.

Considered as a transcendental argument, we may say (following Deleuze and Kant) that in order to experience temporal succession, our capacity to grasp what passes in time must be a constant; it must not pass. This capacity for grasping is what Kant calls a synthesis (*Zusammennehmung*), which gathers together the already-past and the not-yet in a paradoxical present instant. When stases are presented in neo-realist films, then, they are sound-images which present, within

Four Fundamental Concepts of Lyotard's Film-Philosophy

chronological time, something of the subterranean conditions of possibility of time. The network which ties the sound-image to other sound-images in the narrative unfolding do not disappear, but they are strained; reality as constructed by representative-narrative chronology does not vanish, but is suppressed. The ontological real is what subtends reality, like another reality within the reality we typically live according to the sensori-motor schema, which comes to the fore with the “uncanniness” of the stasis.

How then does Lyotard's real compare with the Lacanian real in the context of film? The broad similarity between the two terms is that they are both contrasted with “reality,” understood not as a simple given, but as constituted. The real, for both Lyotard and Lacan, lies in an ambiguous relation of both complementarity and tension with respect to reality: the real is that from which reality is constituted, but which persists, insists, and resists within that reality. It is also highly intriguing – and one cannot help but wonder if this can be nothing but a coincidence – that Lyotard (2000/2017b) invokes the gaze and the voice – two Lacanian examples of the intrusion of the real (see Žižek, 1999) – in his discussions of the “uncanny instances” (p. 69) in neo-realist film. These proximities are highly suggestive, and give us sufficient reason to believe that a comparative analysis and development of Lyotardian and Lacanian notions of the real in film-philosophy may well be highly productive.

However, in the “Sovereign Film” essay, Lyotard specifies that his conception of the real must not be understood as a piece of psychical reality, like a dream that would erupt into waking life. Rather, this real belongs to the register of the secondary psychical processes, but is something like the undercurrent of their workings. Lyotard (2000/2017b) writes that in filmic stases

reality allows “a real” to surface in its familiar components, one that seems to emerge from reality itself, and not from a reality which is only psychical. It is not “my” unconscious (the filmmaker's or the viewer's) that manifests itself then, but the unconscious of reality. (p. 68)

This takes Lyotard's film-philosophy in a direction away from the Lacanian concern with psychical reality and, I would like to suggest, towards a speculative realist aesthetics. Such an aesthetics is still in its infancy, and we must content ourselves here with sketching out a few basic points which might be taken up for further development.

The popular philosophical movement of speculative realism, which has quickly developed over the last decade or so, takes its principle

task to be the rehabilitation of realism against the anti-realism it believes has dominated post-Kantian philosophy (see, for example, Bryant, Srnicek, & Harman, 2011). In various different senses, speculative realists want to think the real, rather than accepting the “correlationist” stance that we can only ever think within an impure admixture of the real and the thought itself which thinks it. While primarily a metaphysical and epistemological endeavour, a few recent developments have attempted some speculative realist forays into aesthetics (for example, Askin, Hägler, & Schweighauser, 2014; Shaviro, 2012; Shaviro, 2014). While Kant is typically positioned as the key adversary of speculative realism, some of these recent suggestions have painted a more positive picture of his third *Critique*. While the first makes the objects of knowledge revolve around and conform to the forms and categories of the mind, the third *Critique* seems to open a passage to a direct aesthetic contact with the real prior to or beyond such forms and categories (Askin, Hägler, & Schweighauser, 2014, pp. 10–12).

Arguably, Lyotard takes just such a direction, pursuing the transcendental analysis to the point of contact with sensation, where it is pure, evanescent difference, sheer sensory data, prior to the syntheses which give it form and make it presentable. For Lyotard (1988/1991),

the paradox of art [...] is that it turns towards a thing which does not turn towards the mind, that it wants a thing, or *has it in for* a thing which wants nothing of it. (p. 142)

The problem that poses itself then for aesthetics is, “how can the mind situate itself, get in touch with something that withdraws from every relationship?” (Lyotard, 1988/1991, p. 142). These formulations, while brief and suggestive, seem to anticipate the attempts to think the real beyond the conditioning imposed by the mind with which speculative realism is concerned. Some of Durafour’s interpretations of Lyotard’s aesthetics head strongly in this direction. For example, he writes, “the question of painting: how does colour ‘see itself? The question of music: how does sound ‘hear itself?’” (Durafour, 2012, p. 263). That is, the questions of art and aesthetics for Lyotard are questions of how to access sensation as it is “in itself,” prior or other to the ways that we throw networks of sense over objects in order to tame and domesticate them for our needs. It is not a question, Durafour (2017) notes, of believing that cinema can give us the “things-in-themselves” (for “how would we know what they are?”), but of letting things come “half-way to meet us” (p. 27). If film is movement, then the real, the matter, of film would be the

Four Fundamental Concepts of Lyotard's Film-Philosophy

condition of possibility of movement, time itself. The question of cinema would then be: how does movement feel itself move, or, how does time feel itself temporalise?

Conclusion

I have proposed Lyotard's work as a still very under-exploited resource for film-philosophy. It might be objected that Lyotard's interventions are too disparate, and do not form a cohesive whole: the essays are written from quite different theoretical perspectives, address different issues, and do not give us a clear picture of what a Lyotardian film-philosophy would look like. There are two responses to be made here. First, despite their surface heterogeneity, at a sufficient level of generality we can see that Lyotard presents a body of work which offers alternatives to the still-common tendency to "read" films, to interpret their meaning according to signs and significations. Instead, he focuses on the non-signifying dimensions of the body, affect, pragmatic relations between film, spectator, and society, and the "real" which resists interpretation, all in ways which challenge and complicate similar moves in phenomenology and psychoanalysis. This is why I have suggested that Lyotard's work is ripe for rediscovery in the contemporary context, with its move from cultural constructivism to realism and materialism. Second, the dispersed and fragmentary nature of Lyotard's ideas was very deliberately cultivated, and can be viewed as a strength. Lyotard was a thinker who doubted the ability of any one perspective to capture what is at stake in philosophical reflections, and approached philosophy experimentally, working as many artists do: trying something out, abandoning it, and trying something else. This method prevents us from treating Lyotard as another master-thinker to be slavishly repeated or applied: it requires us to select from his works, and develop them ourselves in creative ways.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Askin, R., Hägler, A., & Schweighauser, P. (2014). Introduction: Aesthetics after the Speculative Turn. *Speculations*, V: 6–38.
- Barrett, E., & Bolt, B. (Eds.). (2012). *Carnal Knowledge: Towards a "New Materialism" through the Arts*. London; New York: I.B. Tauris.
- Bennet, J. (2010). *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham; London: Duke University Press.
- Brinkema, E. (2014). *The Forms of the Affects*. Durham; London: Duke University Press.
- Bryant, L., Srnicek, N., & Harman, G. (Eds.). (2011). *The Speculative Turn: Continental Materialism and Realism*. Melbourne: re.press.
- Clough, P. T., & Halley, J. (Eds.). (2007). *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social*. Durham; London: Duke University Press.
- Coole, D., & Frost, S. (Eds.). (2010). *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*. Durham; London: Duke University Press.

- Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1972/1983). *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane. London and New York: Continuum.
- Déotte, J.-L. (2004). *L'Époque des appareils*. Paris: Lignes-Léo Scheer.
- Dolphijn, R., & Van der Tuin, I. (2012). *New Materialism: Interviews and Cartographies*. Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press.
- Durafour, J.-M. (2009). *Jean-François Lyotard: questions au cinéma. Ce que le cinéma se figure*. Paris: PUF.
- Durafour, J.-M. (2012). Epilogue. In J.-F. Lyotard (H. Parret, Ed.), *Miscellaneous Texts I: Aesthetics and Theory of Art* (pp. 252–264). Leuven: Leuven University Press.
- Durafour, J.-M. (2017). Cinema Lyotard: An Introduction. In G. Jones and A. Woodward (Eds.), *Acinemas: Lyotard's Philosophy of Film* (pp. 17–30). Edinburgh University Press.
- Eizykman, C. (1975). *La Jouissance-cinéma*. Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions.
- Eizykman, C., & Fihman, G. (2000). L'Oeil de Lyotard: De l'acinéma au postmoderne. In C. Amey and J.-P. Olive (Eds.), *À Partir de Jean-François Lyotard* (pp. 119–147). Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Focillon, H. (1992). *The Life of Forms in Art* (B. Kubler, Trans.). New York: Zone Books.
- French, S. (2010). "If they don't see happiness in the picture at least they'll see the black": Chris Marker's *Sans Soleil* and the Lyotardian Sublime. *Image & Narrative*, 11(1): 64–81.
- Geller, T. L. (2007). "The Film-Work Does Not Think": Refiguring Fantasy for Feminist Film Theory. In M. Grebowicz (Ed.), *Gender After Lyotard* (pp. 139–151). Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- Gregg, M., & Seigworth, G. J. (Eds.). (2010). *The Affect Theory Reader*. Durham; London: Duke University Press.
- Hickey-Moody, A., & T. Page. (Eds.). (2015). *Arts, Pedagogy and Cultural Resistance: New Materialisms*. London: Rowman & Littlefield International.
- Jones, G., & Woodward, A. (Eds.). (2017). *Acinemas: Lyotard's Philosophy of Film*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Lyotard, J.-F. (1988). *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute* (G. Van Den Abbeele, Trans.). Manchester: Manchester University Press. (Original work published 1983).
- Lyotard, J.-F. (1991). *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time* (G. Bennington & R. Bowlby, Trans.). Cambridge: Polity Press. (Original work published 1988).
- Lyotard, J.-F. (1993). *Libidinal Economy* (I. H. Grant, Trans.). London: Athlone. (Original work published 1974).
- Lyotard, J.-F. (2006). The Affect-Phrase (from a Supplement to *The Differend*). In K. Crome and J. Williams (Eds.), *The Lyotard Reader and Guide* (pp. 104–110). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. (Original work published 1990).
- Lyotard, J. (2017a). Cinema. In G. Jones and A. Woodward (Eds.), *Acinemas: Lyotard's Philosophy of Film* (pp. 33–42). Edinburgh University Press. (Original work published 1973).
- Lyotard, J. (2017b). The Idea of a Sovereign Film. In G. Jones and A. Woodward (Eds.), *Acinemas: Lyotard's Philosophy of Film* (pp. 62–70). Edinburgh University Press. (Original work published 2000).
- Lyotard, J. (2017c). The Unconscious as Mise-en-scène. In G. Jones and A. Woodward (Eds.), *Acinemas: Lyotard's Philosophy of Film* (pp. 43–54). Edinburgh University Press. (Original work published 1977).
- Lyotard, J. (2017d). Two Metamorphoses of the Seductive in Cinema. In G. Jones and A. Woodward (Eds.), *Acinemas: Lyotard's Philosophy of Film* (pp. 55–61). Edinburgh University Press. (Original work published 1980).

Four Fundamental Concepts of Lyotard's Film-Philosophy

- Martin, A. (2011). Turn the Page: From *Mise en scène* to *Dispositif*. *Screening the Past*, 31. Retrieved from <http://www.screeningthepast.com/2011/07/turn-the-page-from-mise-en-scene-to-dispositif/>.
- Massumi, B. (1995). The Autonomy of Affect. *Cultural Critique*, 31: 83–109.
- McGowan, T. (2008). *The Real Gaze: Film Theory after Lacan*. New York: SUNY.
- McGowan, T., & Kunkle, S. (Eds.). (2004). *Lacan and Contemporary Film*. New York: Other Press.
- Mee, S. J. A. (2016). Terrifying Spectatorship: Jean-François Lyotard's *Dispositif* and the Expenditure of Intensities in Steven Kastrissios's *The Horseman*. *Philament*, 21: 19–44.
- Mulvey, L. (1975). Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema. *Screen*, 16(3): 6–18.
- Parente, A., & de Carvahlo, V. (2008). Cinema as *Dispositif*: Between Cinema and Contemporary Art. *Cinemas: revue d'études cinématographiques / Cinémas: Journal of Film Studies*, 19(1): 37–55.
- Poe, A. (2011). Things-Beyond-Objects [Book Review of D. Coole & S. Frost (Eds.), *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*]. *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy – Revue de la philosophie française et de langue française*, XIX(1): 153–164.
- Rosen, P. (Ed.). (1986). *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology: A Film Theory Reader*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Rutherford, A. (2003). Cinema and Embodied Affect. *Senses of Cinema*, 25. Retrieved from http://sensesofcinema.com/2003/feature-articles/embodied_affect/.
- Schrader, P. (1972/2018). *Transcendental Style in Film: Ozu, Bresson, Dreyer*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.
- Shaviri, S. (2012). *Without Criteria: Kant, Whitehead, Deleuze, and Aesthetics*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Shaviri, S. (2014). *The Universe of Things: On Speculative Realism*. Minneapolis, MN; London: University of Minnesota Press.
- Trahair, L. (2009). Jean-François Lyotard. In F. Colman (Ed.), *Film, Theory and Philosophy: The Key Thinkers* (pp. 222–232). London; New York: Routledge.
- Woodward, A. (2014). A Sacrificial Economy of the Image: Lyotard on Cinema. *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, 19(4): 141–54.
- Žižek, S. (1999). The Undergrowth of Enjoyment: How Popular Culture can Serve as an Introduction to Lacan. In E. Wright and E. Wright (Eds.), *The Žižek Reader* (pp. 11–36). Oxford; Malden, MA: Blackwell.